

Phones of 6 Governors Were Incorrectly Wired

The American Telephone and Telegraph Company has found that civil defense telephones in the offices of six governors were incorrectly wired so that conversations in the offices could be monitored, but only if the lines were tapped nearby, a company spokesman said yesterday.

The phone survey, begun Tuesday by AT&T after Maryland Gov. Marvin Mandel revealed that his phone could serve as a listening device, uncovered wiring errors in the "hot line" phones in five other states—Delaware, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Utah and Arkansas.

In 38 other states, a company spokesman said, "no wiring errors or conditions that would permit eavesdropping of any kind were found."

The phones in five more

states remain to be examined. Where wiring errors have been found, the mistake "is or will be corrected," the spokesman said.

According to Mandel, a private electronics expert making a routine check of his office discovered that the civil defense phone — part of the national warning system installed by AT&T affiliates — was capable of picking up and transmitting conversations in Mandel's office while the phone was cradled. The phone could not amplify the conversations, however, and any potential eavesdropper would have had to tap the line.

The telephone company said that the phone had been improperly wired but that a safeguard inside the statehouse would prevent transmissions from the cradled phone going any further.

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Mandel's electronics expert, Edward Boyle, said that it would be "very difficult" to monitor conversations from outside the statehouse, but that it could be done. "It would take almost a laboratory to do it," Boyle said. Mandel said he would have the phone moved out of his office.

Boyle said he thought the wiring error was unintentional because if it were deliberate, "it wouldn't be that obvious."

The national warning system is made up of about 1,600 telephones including those in the governors' offices in executive mansions or in statehouses. The governors' phones duplicate those operated by the "state warning point."

These phones are connected to three transmission points of the North American Air Defense Command: At Cheyenne Mountain, Colo., in a two-story underground building in Denton, Tex., and at a classified location "outside Washington." According to the Office of Civil Defense, the system costs about \$1 million annually for maintenance and operation.

The phones are special, four-wire circuit devices designed to insure at least one-way transmission in an emergency. A spokesman for AT&T said last night that the wiring error could not in any way be duplicated on normal household telephones, which are differently constructed. Another company official said the phone company is preparing a complete explanation of the error for the public.

Delaware Gov. Russell W. Peterson learned that his phone was capable of eavesdropping after Mandel called him about the Maryland phone.

Pennsylvania Gov. Raymond P. Shafer had his phone checked earlier in the week by the phone company and announced that it had no prob-

lem. A spokesman for Shafer said yesterday that Shafer's phone had not been checked since and that he was unaware of any wiring defect.

Arkansas Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller could not be reached for comment.

An aide to Illinois Gov. Richard B. Ogilvie said "he is emphatically not upset" by the wiring defect disclosure. An aide to Utah Gov. Calvin L. Rampton said, "He took quite light of it as a matter of fact. He said that if they had taken the trouble to monitor his private conversations, they had taken on an awfully dull task."